

THE MYTH OF ORIGINAL SIN

By Mike Desario
(<http://standingthegap.org/>)

Almost without exception the evangelical Christian world believes that forgiveness of sins and Salvation can be had by praying a simple prayer to God, confessing your sinfulness and Receiving Jesus as your personal Savior. So much so that the entire church world today measures their success or failure against how many

people they can persuade into praying the prayer.

If many respond to the invitation they are pronounced Saved and forgiven of sins, taken into the church and taught that God will someday 'clean' them up and they will be able to live a better life than before. Although the sin never really stops (and this includes ALL sin: fornication, molestation, adultery, drunkenness) it will in time become less and less as you learn to cope with your sinful nature through the application of His Grace.

No one questions this formula or tries to alter it to a more Biblical perspective, although NOTHING in Scripture garners it any support. In the Bible the Procedure is simply: Repentance and Faith.. Repentance Proven by Deeds and Faith Working by Love. But no one seems to care. They gauge everything off the formula and even those who tend to use the correct terminology (mentioning repentance and faith) still hold that Real Salvation can be had using the formals. (Otherwise they

would abandon them as false!).

This applies to their understanding of Revival as well. Since a huge response is considered successful, whatever it takes to get the platform lined up with people is a movement of God! Whether its music, worship teams, motivational speakers or just plain emotional hype, it's counted as God sending His Holy Spirit to rally the troops. There's no godly sorrow for sin among them or anyone crying out to God for Mercy, the tears

are brought about by the Soft Sell Message that God loves and has forgiven them in spite of their vile hearts.

Therefore no one comes away from these meetings seeking to Clear themselves of any wrong doing or make restitution for their sin. There is no Zeal to Do the Right thing by Faith working by love to cleanse and purify the heart. The Revival was successful if they all prayed the prayer and went home feeling warm and fuzzy about meeting God. The Evangelist, triumphant in

the revelry of the day, goes his/her way believing that God has anointed the message and is moving among the people. Church attendance increases.

Accordingly the System grinds on. Getting further and further from the Biblical standards. A new version of the old formula comes along once or twice a year, endorsed by the celebrity preachers of the day, and everyone jumps on board. The Christian market is flooded with new books, DVD's, tapes, tracts and all kinds of other materials to inspire the

latest resurgence of church membership and a flurry of activity. The local pastors are excited to introduce the fresh concepts into their churches and get a reaction from the people. But the new format is just another version of the old one. All based on instantaneous salvation without a REAL Repentance and apart from Genuine faith.

Again, no one seems to care or make any attempt to restore Biblical Purity. Everyone has an opinion however and some even recognize the dilemma, that something is

Desperately Wrong with the standard of conversion in the churches. Yet nothing changes and the formulas remain intact. Salvation has nothing to do with anyone coming out of sin!

That the present day system is a mess of confusing doctrines, men's opinions and religious rhetoric, any causal onlooker could easily determine. But has anyone ever really given it any serious thought as to where all these things originated and HOW we arrived at this existing quandary? It

CERTAINLY wasn't something we learned from the Bible! An atheist could read the first few chapters of the Book of Acts and see that it offers absolutely NO support for anything going on in the churches today.

Nevertheless, HOW did we go from: 'Repent, Deny yourself, Take up your cross and follow Jesus, Endure to the End, count the cost, Strive to enter the Narrow Gate,'

To: 'Confess your sinfulness and Receive Jesus as your Personal savior!' (Which is WRITTEN NO WHERE in

the Pages of Scripture!).

WHO decided that this was the Gospel and the Other, (Quoted directly by Christ Himself!) is not? And WHEN did it happen? What is it that has made this non-biblical method so universal that EVERYONE is willing to face the eternal Judgment on such a flimsily base?

There's a great deal at stake in answering these questions in an honest and fair manner. Entire creeds, confessionals, doctrinal statements and the orthodoxy of huge denominations are on the

the Apostles and that their particular church group originated from Apostolic Doctrines. Even though history can place an almost exact date on the formation of EVERY evangelical denomination somewhere between the 1500 and 1800 hundreds. NONE of them have their roots in Apostolic Christianity. Including the much lauded Catholic church.

Why then does almost everyone think otherwise? These are merely basic historical facts easily verified through research. They are not a matter of

anyone's opinion or private interpretations. But to be aware of how all this has brought us to where we are today, you do need examine the facts OUTSIDE the Box of your cherished denominations and doctrinal roots. Otherwise you will NEVER be able to see beyond the arguments between the theologians and scholars. Understand that you can always find a dissenting voice in the mix no matter how you approach these things. But understand also 'who' is Grinding the axe and why. Examining

something objectively when your mind has already pre-determined the outcome is impossible. If you have abandon the first principles of Repentance and faith in their purest form, as handed down by Christ and the Apostles, nothing really remains of substance in your preaching of the Gospel.. Either we begin here or not at all, to argue this would be a betrayal of the faith.

Origins:

First let's establish a

Premise from which to begin. (a basics of truth we can all agree upon, if that's possible) During the Apostolic period of the Christian Church the Preaching and the Doctrine were Sound and Pure. Handed down from Christ Himself and the Holy Prophets and entrusted to a select group of men who wrote down MOST of what we accept as our New Testament Scripture. Unless we can agree that Christianity began on a Principle and foundation of Repentance, Faith and Purity, our discussion is in

vain.

Also it is necessary to understand that the purpose of this article is not to write a detailed account of Church history. Although it will include several historical facts, dates and persons, but only as it relates to our main Subject of the Preaching of Repentance and faith. It is my intention to show how the Demise of this message (in its purest form) is the main reason behind the Great departure from the faith we have seen over the Centuries. When you realize how far back this

goes into ancient times and how much it has effected the preaching of the Gospel today, perhaps you will be able to recognize the real difference between the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error in your own churches.

The Instructions were Simple! Go forth, into all Nations, Preaching Repentance and Faith, Baptizing in the Name of Jesus! From the beginning the CORE of the Message was TURN From Sin to God, be Cleansed from the inside out and FOLLOW

the Master. Simplistic and Powerful, unmistakably from God! Then He said to them, *‘Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Luke 24:46-48*

However after the deaths of the Apostle and their immediate disciples, this Message got Confused with

teaching) around 386, (shortly after Roman Emperor Theodosius I decreed the death of all Manicheans and shortly before he declared Christianity the only legitimate Roman Religion.) Thus his conversion was one of necessity not conviction of Truth.

Augustine became a major player in ancient Rome as a scholar theologian skilled in Latin literature as well as Pagan beliefs and practices. He was the son of a Roman Pagan father

rhetoric in Milan.

Politically connected and a respected scholar, he continued to dabble in the pagan philosophies and take up with other women as opportunity presented itself. Although his supposed conversion to Christianity is highly venerated in Christian literature to the point of legend, it occurred merely as is related above, out of convenience during a period of political unrest in the Roman Empire. He then became a driving force in the corruption of

of the Roman Empire. But the forces of evil were hard at work to hinder their progress. As the 2nd Century progressed most of these Disciples were either killed or disappeared from the scene. Rome slowly began to gain pre-eminence as the Center of Religious influence and the Bishops started maneuvering for power. In 189AD an African Bishop named Victor gained an ecclesiastical authority and became bishop of Rome. He began immediately to break away from the teaching of the Apostles.

teachings of the Apostle John and his disciple Polycarp. He also changed the reading of the Mass in the Roman Churches from Greek to Latin and wrote theology in Latin. He remained in power until 199AD establishing Pope like authority in Rome.

Thus the spirit of error had gained its foothold in the early church well into the Second Century AD. The debate took the focus of Repentance and faith and centered around interpretations, manuscripts and

speculative teachings about God. During this time the second generation of Pre-Nicean fathers introduced many heresies into the church. The disputes continued as the church took on more and more the appearance of ecclesiastical hierarchies run by a group of men hungry for power and influence, rather than an evangelistic movement preaching Christ to the lost world. (The Early Church, By: Henry Chadwick)

Setting the Stage:

The Supposed conversion to Christianity of Roman Emperor Constantine in the early 3rd Century marks a major turning point of church history. He was the son of Constantius Chlorus, a former military man of high position in Rome who managed to get an appointment to Junior Emperor of the western empire in 293 under Diocletian, who was Senior Emperor. (those were called “Augustus”, the Junior Emperors were called “Caesar”) As a member of the high court under his father and

Constantine's father took sick and died suddenly, but not before appointing his son in his place. This was opposed to Diocletian wishes, although Constantine maintained his power base in the West and expanded his borders in Britain, Gaul and Germania. After he defeated the raiding armies of the Franks he launched a major building campaign and issue more tolerate decrees of the Christians. His military conquests continued in the West and his political rivals moved to dislodge him from power.

The rebellion that led to his conversion took place in 312 when his rival Maxentius, led his army against Constantine's eastern flank, weakened by his deployment of troops along the Rhine to contain the Franks. Constantine could not risk withdrawing the bulk of his army off the Rhine to meet Maxentius's advance so he mustered his praetorian and Imperial Horse Guard, and some other troops, marched them across the Alps into Italy and prepared to meet Maxentius's much larger

force in a decisive battle that would decide the fate of the Western Empire. He first encountered Maxentius's heavy Calvary and lured them into trap, surrounded them then slaughtered them in the field. He then quickly moved through Northern Italy and met the bulk of Maxentius's forces at the battle of Milvian Bridge.

Arrogantly assuming Constantine's army was no match to his superior numbers; Maxentius advanced from his fortifications (fortifications? This was the strongly

deity, created out of different sun gods) (On Line Wikipedia).

What does all this have to do with Repentance and faith? Everything when you realize that at this point in Church history the Christian church moved from underground into the grand cathedrals of Rome and took on a priestly appearance of new authority. Constantine's reforms began immediately with the Edict of Milan (313), which stopped all persecutions and returned confiscated property to the

Repentance and faith within what was forming as the SYSTEM. The issues taken up at the Council were: the Arian question (a heresy of ancient times), the celebration of the Passover, the Meletian schism (another heresy), the Father and Son (early discussion of concept of Trinity, this last identical to the Arian question), the baptism of heretics and persecution (the question was if people, who denied Jesus in the time of persecution should be allowed to retain their positions of authority in

the church and if baptisms executed by them and by heretics would be valid or should be repeated). They adopted a Creed and passed measures ruling over the establishment of authority in the churches.

NOTHING they debated or discussed had anything to do with re-focusing the Gospel on the Message of Repentance and faith. The Creed stated basically their concept of God and the rulings centered around ordination, Holy communion and reading of a Mass. Thus the Catholic

church was now established and would exercise more and more authority over the Empire as time went on. Constantine died in 337 leaving a power vacuum among his surviving sons and daughters, they then brutally fought for power, just like their father had done. His rightful heir, oldest son Crispus, he had killed in 326 for his alleged immorality; he may had other motives. Constantine's impact on Church history cannot be passed over lightly. It set the stage for the Death of

the Gospel Message preached by the Apostles by establishing a System that could eradicate any opposition that opposed its authority.

The Turning Point:

In 354 Augustine was born. The System of Christianity was well established in Rome by this time, including Bishops and a Pope ruling over the churches with great influence and authority. Augustine had the perfect power base from which to

monumentally disseminate his version of Christian Doctrine. From 413 to 427 he wrote an immense apologia called the 'City of God' in which he argues for just war, the church militant on earth and the dual nature of man. Drawing from his Manichean background he saw the nature of man as corrupt but the soul pure. Therefore a constant struggle was engaged, the good against the evil, darkness verses light. This was the basis of his original sin teaching that the sin of Adam is passed down

corrupting man's nature
making it impossible for
him to obey God.

Here is a quote from his
confessions:

*"I still thought that it is not
we who sin but some other
nature that sins within us.
It flattered my pride to
think that I incurred no
guilt and, when I did
wrong, not to confess it... I
preferred to excuse myself
and blame this unknown
thing which was in me but
was not part of me. The
truth, of course, was that it
was all my own self, and*

need for Grace. (Saying, in other words that man can save himself by obeying God!) But he DID NOT in any manner whatsoever claim that man could ‘save himself’ only that he was FULLY capable of obedience to God and Stopping sin. Grace also, he would affirm, was as stated in Titus 2:11-14, the Divine aid or assistance from God to live a godly live in Christ, with self- control in the present age.

Pelagius said:

“God Justifies by faith

apart from works of the law. But in this the Apostle is speaking of circumcision and Jewish ritual, not exempting man from the Works of Righteousness whereby his faith is made perfect! ”(James 2:22-24) (Pelagius Commentary on Romans, Theodore Debruyn)

To Pelagius Salvation necessitated to ‘Believe’ and to ‘DO’, the focus was on Action, not God doing it for you. But Augustine had already affirmed in his theology that man could not obey because of his

with the new Pope explaining free will and man's responsibility to repent. This book much impressed the Pope, along with the high morality of the Pelagian followers. He even spoke to the African Bishops telling them they had reacted to prejudice accounts of Pelagius. But they exploded with fiery indignation and tried to force the Pope's hand against Pelagius.

Augustine then used his connections to enlist the Emperor himself in the fray, to pressure the Pope.

Catholic church to dictate orthodoxy for the next 1000 years. The Message of Repentance and faith were officially dead at this point in history, (418A.D.) rendered null and void by the Augustinian Doctrines of Original sin, Election, Predestination and the nature of God. All of which originated (without a shadow of a doubt!) from his Pagan teachings. History proves that Augustine converted to Christianity out of necessity, never abandoned his former pagan ideals, would resort to any means

of any sin! Catholic Salvation through the ages is based on this fallacy and although the Protestants of the reformation rejected and broke away from the endless rituals and liturgy, they tightly embraced the Augustinian notion of Original sin. Therefore True Repentance on both sides is highly unlikely.

Further opposition to the Augustinian doctrines did occur in the Empire, but nothing of any consequence or that had any lasting effect. Dissenters were quickly

refuted by Augustine and forced to flee or face the possibility of prison or even death. As Augustine pressed his Doctrines of Predestination and irresistible Grace, based on man's inability to obey God, a competent Bishop named Julian of Eclanum withstood him. But with his political connections and prestigious position, Augustine could not be contested. To this Day you will find that anyone who opposed him is considered a Pelagian heretic!

Who are the Real Heretics?

This is the legacy handed down through the ages and has Created a Monstrous System of Error in Control today. Many wrongly believe that the Great Reformation, that brought us out of the Dark ages of the Catholic tyranny, restored the Pure Gospel Message or Repentance and faith to the world. But it failed to return the church to its Apostolic roots.

All it really accomplished was to create more factions and division in the church by continuing to Build on Augustine's error of Original sin. Had the Reformers abandon these notions instead of expounding on them and expanding their influence, perhaps much of their work would have had a lasting effect on society. But as history reveals, even they persecuted others who denied that man was born depraved and was fully capable of obedience to God by his free and independent will. If you

Examine the Record you find Pelagius in Perfect agreement with the Early Church fathers. The concept of original sin did not come about until sometime in the 4th Century and by NO MEANS is it taught by the Apostle Paul in Romans Five. Who are the real heretics? The Evidence points to the Modern Churches who STILL Embrace Augustine's Doctrines!

Justin Martyr, (100-165)
said:

“Every created being is so constituted as to be capable of vice and virtue. For he can do nothing praiseworthy, if he had not the power of turning either way.” And “unless we suppose man has the power to choose the good and refuse the evil, no one can be accountable for any action whatever.” (A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs by David Bercot, published by Hendrickson Publishers)

Tertullian (160-225) said:

“No reward can be justly

bestowed, no punishment can be justly inflicted, upon him who is good or bad by necessity, and not by his own choice. (A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs by David Bercot, published by Hendrickson Publishers)

Origen (185-254) said,

“The soul does not incline to either part out of necessity, for then neither vice nor virtue could be ascribed to it; nor would its choice of virtue deserve reward; nor its declination to vice punishment.”

Again, “How could God require that of man which he [man] had not power to offer Him? (A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs by David Bercot, published by Hendrickson Publishers)

Clement of Alexandria
(150-216) said,

“Neither promises nor apprehensions, rewards, no punishments are just if the soul has not the power of choosing and abstaining; if evil is involuntary. (A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs

*by David Bercot, published
by Hendrickson
Publishers)*

Justin Martyr said,

*“The human race.. from
Adam had fallen under the
power of death and the
guile of the serpent. Each
one had committed
personal transgression.”
(c.160, A Dictionary of
Early Christian Beliefs by
David Bercot, p. 271,
published by Hendrickson
Publishers)*

Irenaeus said,

“By means of our first parents, we were all brought into bondage by being made subject to death.” (c.180, A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs by David Bercot, p. 271, published by Hendrickson Publishers)

Justin Martyr said,

“In the beginning, He made the human race with the power of thought and of choosing truth and doing right, so that all men are without excuse before God.” (c.160, A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs

*by David Bercot, p. 271,
published by Hendrickson
Publishers)*

Justin Martyr said,

*“Let some suppose, from
what has been said by us,
that we say that whatever
occurs happens by a fatal
necessity, because it is
foretold as known
beforehand, this too we
explain. We have learned
from the prophets, and we
hold it to be true, that
punishments,
chastisements, and good
rewards, are rendered
according to the merit of*

Hendrickson Publishers)

Justin Martyr said,

“I have proved in what has been said that those who were foreknown to be unrighteous, whether men or angels, are not made wicked by God’s fault. Rather, each man is what he will appear to be through his own fault.”

(c.160, A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs by David Bercot, p. 286, published by Hendrickson Publishers)

Tatian said,

Melito said,

“There is, therefore, nothing to hinder you from changing your evil manner to life, because you are a free man.”

(c.170, A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs by David Bercot, p. 286, published by Hendrickson Publishers)

Theophilus said,

“If, on the other hand, he would turn to the things of death, disobeying God, he would himself be the cause of death to himself. For

*Bercot, p. 287, published
by Hendrickson
Publishers)*

Clement of Alexandria said,

*“We.. have believed and
are saved by voluntary
choice.” (c.195, A*

*Dictionary
of Early Christian Beliefs
by David Bercot, p. 287,
published by Hendrickson
Publishers)*

Clement of Alexandria said,

*“Each one of us who sins
with his own free will,
chooses punishment. So*

the blame lies with him who chooses. God is without blame.” (c.195, A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs by David Bercot, p. 287, published by Hendrickson Publishers)

Clement of Alexandria said,

“To obey or not is in our own power, provided we do not have the excuse of ignorance.” (c.195, A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs by David Bercot, p. 287, published by Hendrickson Publishers)

Tertullian said,

“I find, then, that man was constituted free by God. He was master of his own will and power.. .For a law would not be imposed upon one who did not have it in his power to render that obedience which is due to law. Nor again, would the penalty of death be threatened against sin, if a contempt of the law were impossible to man in the liberty of his will.. .Man is free, with a will either for obedience or resistance.

or had Elected some to be Saved and others lost! These were all Pagan Concepts, easily confirmed by researching, Manichiean, and Gnostic beliefs. Both of which teach without doubt that sin is in the Nature, not a Choice!

The Fallacy of Augustinian Doctrine runs directly through the Reformation to Modern Day. With only a FEW small exceptions along the way. If you trace the opposition raised against this doctrine you will find that in EVERY instance the dissenters

in Germany). Fresh translations of the Scriptures in the native languages began to appear and the common man was able for the first time to have and to read the very words of Christ for himself! Many came to understand how they had been short changed by the controlling Catholic church for so long and a small explosion took place. People started speaking out, writing tracts and articles, exposing the errors that had kept them in bondage to sin. The fact that they did all this without an organization to

the example of Christ. Faith was expressed in the DOING what Jesus had commanded, not debating what it meant! In comparison to the Protestants of the reformation (who considered them heretics) they answered in this manner:

The Anabaptists did not answer John Calvin in writing. They answered him with their lives. "I am the way and the truth and the life." To the Protestants, the Bible was the manifesto, an end in

itself. Once they reached an agreement on how to "properly" interpret it, they revered it and treated it with gallant devotion. They preached and persecuted and fought mighty wars in defense of the Bible and its doctrines. To the Anabaptists, the Bible was simply the book that took them to Christ. The Protestants found the "key" to Bible interpretation in the epistles of Paul. But the Anabaptists found it in Christ and his Sermon on the Mount. The Protestants saw in Paul a great theologian, the expositor of

the doctrines of faith and grace. The Anabaptists saw in Paul a man who forsook everything to become a "fool for Christ's sake." They found community with him in his martyr's death. The Protestants lived to obey their authorities. They spoke much about "God-ordained authority" and held their princes and church leaders in highest esteem. The Anabaptists lived to obey Christ. The Protestants worked en masse and waited until "everyone was ready" to make changes in religious practice. The

Anabaptists did, on first opportunity, what they thought Christ wanted them to do. If no one else joined them, they did it alone. The Protestants followed a logical course. Theologians, princes and educators planned what to do in a way that made sense. The Anabaptists followed Christ without making plans. That did not make sense. But it was the secret of their great strength. And it led them. (Peter Hoover, Secret of Strength)

Both movements had their

extremes and can be accused of false doctrines. In this observation we will reserve the finger pointing to the Original Sin issue because it alone has served to Render the Message of Real Repentance null in void in our time frame.

As with every faction outside the System throughout history (if you investigate them) the Converts Truly Repented and Came OUT of their sins. They Followed Christ, not Doctrines, and they OBEYED the Word at all cost to themselves. Surly these are those of whom

the World is NOT Worthy
and are Dead yet Speak
volumes to our generation.
(Secret of the Strength, By
Peter Hoover, ebook:
[www.gw.org:80/Sos/index.
htm](http://www.gw.org:80/Sos/index.htm))

The Anabaptists were
persecuted practically out
of existence before 1600.
Those who escaped alive
found their way to the new
world and eventually
became other
denominations among the
many already in existence.
Like the holiness reformers
after them, these splintered
organizations quickly

became mere shadows of their original roots. Today the entire System is corrupted and without exception has embraced the 'Come in your sins' message as Gospel. Although you will find much said about holiness, the necessity of obedience to Christ and godly living, you WON'T find anyone willing to say that the sin has to Stop in the Process of Repentance.

They will say that the convert must 'Want' to Stop sinning, have a 'Desire' to stop and even

indeed this Grace (in whatever form) can Stop the sin, then the house of cards comes down! Then you would have to Repent (stop sinning!) and Obey from your heart. You would not be able to Come into the Kingdom dragging the Old Man with you!

The Entire Lie Hangs on the existence of Original Sin. If it can be wholly removed or does not actually exist, the System falls apart. Millions if not Billions of souls have based their eternal destiny on this fallacy and have come to

God in their sins. Whole Generations have come and gone believing in it! Wars have been fought over it, Nations destroyed by it. It's the Top of the Pyramid of all false Doctrines. They will do anything to Protect it and destroy anyone who opposes it. **It is Satan's Masterpiece!**